

Intermediate Microeconomic Theory
Economics 3070-002

Professor M. J. Greenwood

Fall 2010

Office: ECON 106

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 2:00-4:00; and by appointment.

PREREQUISITES: ECON 1000 or 2010; and either ECON 1078 and 1088, or MATH 1300, or MATH 1310, or MATH 1081, or MATH 1080, 1090, and 1100, or APPM 1350, or equivalent.

COURSE OUTLINE

Text: Walter Nicholson and Christopher Snyder, *Intermediate Microeconomics and Its Application*, Eleventh Edition (South-Western, 2010).

Part I: Theories of Consumer Behavior and Demand

1. Introduction: Chapter 1
2. Utility and Choice: Chapters 2, 3
3. Individual and Market Demand: Chapter 3
4. Market Demand and Elasticity: Chapter 3

Part II: Theories of Production and Cost

5. Production: Chapter 6
6. Costs: Chapter 7

Part III: Theories of Price and Output under Various Market Circumstances

7. Profit Maximization and Supply: Chapter 8
8. Perfect Competition: Chapters 8, 9
9. Monopoly: Chapter 11
10. Imperfect Competition: Chapter 12

Part IV: Factor Markets

11. Pricing in Input Markets: Chapter 13

Part V: Other Topics

12. General Equilibrium: Chapter 10
13. Externalities and Public Goods: Chapter 16
14. Strategy and Game Theory: Chapter 5

This course is divided into five sections. The first deals with theories of consumer behavior and demand. The second treats theories of production and cost. The third considers the firm under various types of market structure, including perfect competition, monopoly, and structures intermediate between these two extremes. The fourth part of the course focuses on factor markets, and the fifth on general equilibrium (as distinct from partial equilibrium, which is an implicit assumption in most of the earlier material of the course.) If time allows, we will also study externalities and public goods, and perhaps other topics as well.

COMMENTS ABOUT THE COURSE

This course is essentially the language course of economics. The terms and concepts developed here are basic to economists in conversing with one another, and they underlie, in one way or another, much of economic theory and the policy implications derived therefrom. Economists often think of the terms and concepts of microeconomic theory as the nuts and bolts of economics, and they speak of the “tools” of economics or their “tool kit” in reference to the material of this course. Perhaps more importantly, economists use these tools to better understand how economies such as that of the United States and other countries around the world, both advanced and less developed, operate.

Scarcity is a prevailing fact of life. Neither at the aggregate nor at the individual level can we have all of everything we want. This is where economics comes into play, for we must make choices about what and how much to produce and how to best use society’s scarce resources. Who shall consume what is produced and in what quantities? Who shall produce what is to be consumed and how shall this output be produced (i.e., by what technology and by what combination of inputs)? What is the role of relative prices (of outputs and inputs) in providing answers to these questions? How much of society’s output should be allocated to current as opposed to future consumption? Who shall make the decisions that address the answers to these questions? This is what economics as a social science is about. It is questions such as these that we will confront in this class. Our unit of analysis will be the individual consumer and the individual firm.

My goal in this course is to convey to you an understanding of the basic tools of economic theory. The course could be taught with great emphasis on calculus, but that is not my approach. Rather, I emphasize diagrams, although I will use calculus. I expect you to understand the basics of numerous diagrams that, in pictures, reflect the concepts that are most important in intermediate microeconomic theory. To learn these many diagrams well, you must redraw and work with them. Many of the diagrams can be found on the web site (<http://www.colorado.edu/Economics/courses/fall10-3070-002.html>).

Because I have never met a student who could do very well in this course without attending class regularly, I have an attendance requirement. Every day I will either take the roll myself (early in the term) or pass around an attendance roster (later in the term). After three absences (beginning with absence four), 5 points will be deducted from the student’s overall score for each absence. Ten points will be added for any student who misses no more than one class. No excuses are available for a student to receive this bonus. Please come to class. Although many diagrams are available online, many others are developed only on the board. **Open computers are not allowed at any time, except with the professor’s specific permission.**

EXAMINATION SCHEDULE/GRADING POLICY

Four major examinations will be given. The four exams will each cover approximately one-quarter of the course material and will count for **100 points** each. Forty percent of each examination consists of multiple choice questions. I offer a lengthy list of practice multiple choice questions, which you will find on the web site. Please use these questions. I also will give several homework assignments that will be graded and scored. Homework points will be factored into the students overall score as bonus points. I expect students to treat these assignments as take-home exams. You are on your honor to do these assignments by yourself, on your own.

NOTE: No makeup exams are offered and none will be scheduled.

Examination Schedule

Examination #1:	September 17
Examination #2:	October 15
Examination #3:	November 10
Examination #4:	December 15 (1:30pm–4:00pm)